

Appl. No. 10/725,559
Amdt. Dated April 5, 2005
Reply to Office Action of February 17, 2005

REMARKS

Claims 8-15 and 19-32 remain in this application. Claims 8, 13 and 32 are amended, correcting minor administrative errors. No new matter is added.

Reconsideration of the subject patent application and allowance of all of the claims is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claim Amendment

Claims 8, 13 and 32 have been amended to correct minor, non-substantive administrative errors and are not amended for reasons related to patentability.

Information Disclosure Statement

The Examiner has not considered two references, DE 19647232 and EP 0960710, cited in the Information Disclosure Statement filed in the U.S. parent application (U.S. application no. 09/857,176) on June 18, 2001 ("the '176 application"), because no English translation was provided. These references were first cited in an International Search Report ("ISR") in the corresponding PCT application. An English language translation of the ISR was provided with the Information Disclosure Statement filed on June 18, 2001 in the '176 application. Attached is a copy of the Transmittal Letter (Form PTO-1390) for the '176 application, confirming the filing of the English language translation of the ISR with the '176 application. Accordingly, Applicant submits that these references, properly cited in the '176 application, should have been considered on their merits in this application, a divisional application of the '176 application (see M.P.E.P. § 609(I)(A)(2) ("The Examiner will consider information which has been considered by the Office in a parent application when examining . . . a divisional application filed under 37 C.F.R. § 1.53(b). . . . A listing of the information need not be resubmitted in the continuing application unless the applicant desires the information to be printed on the patent.")). Nevertheless, in order to expedite prosecution of this application, Applicant attaches the English language copy of the ISR with this Amendment.

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Furthermore, Applicant notes that one of the references, EP 0 960 710, did not publish until December 1, 1999, which is later than the October 19, 1999 priority date of the present application. Accordingly, this reference is not prior art for the present application.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 8-10, 12-14 and 32 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Murasaki (EP 0580073 A2). The Examiner asserts that Murasaki discloses all of the limitations of these claims.

Applicant respectfully disagrees. Murasaki, at a minimum, fails to teach or suggest the following limitation of independent claims 8 and 32 (quoted from claim 8):

wherein said molding/demolding strip has a first non-raised position and a second raised position and wherein the molding/demolding strip is capable of assuming said second position to nondestructively release the at least one undercut attachment of the plastic panel after the at least one undercut attachment has left the at least one roll nip.

Murasaki discloses a wheel die (2) having a plurality of hook molding cavities (5) formed on the outer surface thereof (col. 7, lines 15-17). A backing material is fed around the wheel die, and molten resin is extruded onto the backing material. The molten resin fills the hook molding cavities, creating resin "hooks," and as the backing material and resin is guided around the wheel die the resin starts to cool and solidify and integrate with the backing material (col. 8, lines 1-2 and 24-30). The backing material/resin are then disengaged from the wheel die, at which time the hooks are "tugged" out of the hook molding cavities (col. 8, lines 30-36).

Thus, as described above and illustrated in Figs. 1-3 of Murasaki, the surface of the wheel die of Murasaki is static, and Murasaki does not teach or suggest the presently claimed features of a molding/demolding strip with a first non-raised position and a second raised position, the molding/demolding strip being capable of assuming the second position to nondestructively release an undercut attachment formed within the die. As described in the present specification, prior art methods of forming attachments/anchors impair the function of the anchors by damaging or weakening them when they are disengaged from their dies (page 3, lines 7-18). The hooks of Murasaki would suffer similar damage/weakening as they are "tugged" out of the wheel die. In

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contrast, the presently claimed apparatus allows for the formation and release of undercut attachments (in the shape of, e.g., inverted cones or anchors) without stressing or weakening the attachments.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that Murasaki fails to teach or suggest all of the elements of claims 8 and 32 and that the Examiner has failed to establish a prima facie case of anticipation of claims 8 and 32 in view of Murasaki. Applicant therefore requests that the rejection of claims 8 and 32 be withdrawn.

Claims 9, 10, 12-14 are dependent on claim 8 and incorporate all of its limitations. As Applicant submits that claim 8 is allowable, Applicant requests that the rejections of these claims be also withdrawn.

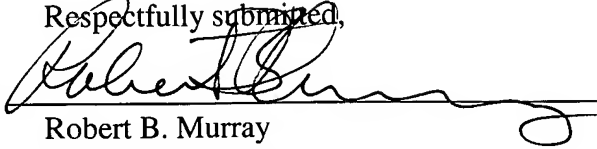
Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 11 and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Murasaki in view of Reil (U.S. Patent No. 4,196,035). Claims 11 and 15 are dependent on claim 8 and incorporate all of its limitations. In addition, Reil does not cure the deficiencies of Murasaki discussed above. Accordingly, as Applicant asserts that since claim 8 is allowable, claims 11 and 15, dependent thereon, are also allowable and Applicant requests that the rejections of these claims be also withdrawn.

Claims 19-31 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Murasaki in view of Fuda (JP 2000-225650 A). Claim 19 includes similar limitations as those discussed above for claims 8 and 32, which limitations are not disclosed or suggested by Murasaki. Furthermore, Applicant submits that Fuda is not prior art to the present application. As acknowledged by the Examiner, the present application claims priority to a foreign application under 35 U.S.C. § 119. The present application is a divisional of U.S. Patent Application No. 09/857,176, filed June 18, 2001, which is a 371 of PCT/EP99/07904, filed October 19, 1999. As Fuda's publication date of August 15, 2000 is later than the October 19, 1999 priority date of the present application, Applicant submits that Fuda is not prior art for the present application and therefore requests that the rejection of claims 19-31 be withdrawn.

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Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,
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Enclosure: Transmittal letter and International Search Report filed with the '176 application